CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A hidden fastening system for decorative trim or molding comprising:

a. an elongated piece of pre-finished trim or molding, said piece having an outer face including at least one elongated kerf therein, said kerf having a width and a depth;

b. a fastener, said fastener having an inner end, an outer end with a head thereon, and a shank extending between said inner end and said outer end, said width and said depth of said kerf being sufficient to accommodate said head in recessed relation below said outer face when said fastener is installed through said piece, with said inner end and a portion of said shank extending into a backing structure; and,

c. means for filling said kerf and covering said head of said fastener.

2. A system as in claim 1 in which said fastener is either a screw or a nail.

3. A system as in claim 1 in which said piece of trim or molding has a first end and a second end, and in which said elongated kerf extends from said first end to said second end.

4. A system as in claim 3 including a second kerf extending from said first end to said second end, said kerfs being in arranged in substantially parallel relation.

5. A system as in claim 1 in which said means for filling comprises a strip of rubber, plastic, wood,

or composite material.

6. A system as in claim 1 in which said means for filling comprises an injectable fluid material, hardenable after said kerf is filled.

7. A system as in claim 1 in which said outer face includes a three-dimensional design feature, and in which said kerf is located adjacent or within said three-dimensional design feature.

8. A hidden fastening system for decorative trim or molding comprising:

a. an elongated piece of pre-finished trim or molding, said piece having an outer face including at least one elongated kerf therein, said kerf having a width and a depth;

b. a fastener, said fastener having an inner end, an outer end with a head thereon, and a shank extending between said inner end and said outer end, said width and said depth of said kerf being sufficient to accommodate said head in recessed relation below said outer face when said fastener is installed through said piece, with said inner end and at least a portion of said shank extending into a backing structure; and,

c. an elongated strip of resilient material, said strip having a transverse dimension sized to fit snugly within said kerf, and a length sufficient to fill said kerf and cover said head of said fastener.

9. A system as in claim 8 in which said elongated strip is plastic or rubber.

10. A hidden fastening system for decorative trim or molding comprising:

a. an elongated piece of pre-finished trim or molding, said piece having an outer face including at least one elongated kerf therein, said kerf having a width and a depth;

b. a fastener, said fastener having an inner end, an outer end with a head thereon, and a shank extending between said inner end and said outer end, said width and said depth of said kerf being sufficient to accommodate said head in recessed relation below said outer face when said fastener is installed through said piece, with said inner end and at least a portion of said shank extending into a backing structure; and,

c. an injectable fluid material located within and substantially filling said kerf, said fluid material being hardenable after said kerf is substantially filled.

11. A system as in claim 10 in which said injectable fluid material is caulking.

12. A receptacle for connecting two or more pieces of molding or trim, said receptacle comprising:

a. a first receiver having an open outer end and an inner end;

b. a second receiver having an open outer end and an inner end; and,

c. a juncture between said inner ends of said first and second receivers, each of said first and second receivers having an internal cavity extending from said open outer end to said inner end which is sized and configured to accommodate and cover an end portion of a piece of molding or trim inserted therein.

13. A receptacle as in claim 12 in which said juncture comprises an outside corner, and in which said

first and second receivers have axes which are maintained at 90°, 120°, or 135° with respect to each other.

14. A receptacle as in claim 12 in which said juncture comprises an inside corner, and in which said first and second receivers have axes which are maintained at 90°, 120°, or 135° with respect to each other.

15. A receptacle as in claim 12 in which each of said first and second receivers includes retaining means for securing the molding or trim to the receptacle without the use of fasteners or adhesives.

16. A receptacle as in claim 15 in which said retaining means comprises an upper lip and a lower trough.

17. A receptacle as in claim 15 in which said retaining means comprises at least one rib.

18. A receptacle as in claim 12 in which said first and second receivers define respective planes which are oblique with respect to each other.

19. A receptacle as in claim 18 in which said first and second receivers are adapted to receive crown molding or trim.

20. A coupler for connecting two or more pieces of molding or trim, said coupler comprising: a first

receiver and a second receiver, each of said first and second receivers being sized and configured to accommodate and cover an end portion of a piece of molding or trim inserted therein.

21. A coupler as in claim 20 in which each of said first and second receivers includes retaining means for securing the molding or trim to the coupler without the use of fasteners or adhesives.

22. A coupler as in claim 21 in which said retaining means comprises an upper lip and a lower trough.

23. A receptacle as in claim 21 in which said retaining means comprises at least one rib.